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THE SECRETARY OF STATE

WASHINGTON

July 30, 1982

MEMORANDUM TO: THE PRESIDENT

FROM: George P. Shultz *GPS*

SUBJECT: Progress on Solving West Beirut Problem

The Arab League issued a very helpful declaration yesterday. It says the PLO will announce its decision to leave Beirut. It does not link the departure to concessions by our side on the peace process. It calls for an international force, but does not mention the UN. It also opens the way for the four key Arab states -- Jordan, Syria, Egypt and Iraq -- to accept PLO contingents. Thus it is supportive of our approach -- which is to get the PLO out and end the suffering in the city.

Phil Habib thus has delivered on the two points he mentioned to Begin on Wednesday: he has set up another ceasefire, and the PLO unequivocally is prepared to go. In view of this we asked Begin this morning to restore water and power and supplies to West Beirut so that Phil can have an environment in which detailed talks can take place on the method and timing of departure. Begin refused, apparently in the belief that continued pressure is necessary. Phil now needs our help to clear away the many obstacles that others are putting in the way of a successful outcome. Here is how I plan to proceed:

- I will send a message to Begin saying that we have reached a point where Phil's effort requires easing Israeli pressure on the city. I will make no promise, but tell Begin that his cooperation at this moment is crucial.
- We will call in the French Ambassador and ask that Paris be prepared to send in military liaison officers to work with Phil at the appropriate moment on multinational force questions. (Phil has asked for this).
- With Egyptian Foreign Minister Ali today we will point out that the Arab League declaration does not support Egypt's claim that the PLO will not leave; nor does it support Egypt's attempt to link West Beirut to the peace process. We will ask Egypt to commit itself to taking several thousand PLO combatants; this is key to Phil's success.

State Dept. review completed

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-- I will send messages to the Arab League governments involved expressing appreciation for their constructive declaration. I will rededicate the U.S. to reaching an honorable outcome in West Beirut, and let them know that we intend to move forward toward solving the underlying Palestinian question in all its aspects.

In addition to the above, Phil has asked for authority to enter -- if he feels it necessary -- into "proximity talks" with Arafat. This would not be direct contact and would not violate our commitment to Israel. It would, however, mean that Phil would be in the same building with the PLO and talking through an intermediary. It will be opposed by Begin and get much publicity. Unless you object strenuously, I will give Phil this contingency authority and inform the Israelis of it beforehand.

Finally, tomorrow is Begin's birthday. I will be preparing messages to him from you and me in which we can reinforce some of the above points and try to ease his concerns and get his cooperation.

## Recommendation:

That I be authorized to give Phil authority to enter into proximity talks when he feels it essential to carry out his mission:

Approve \_\_\_\_\_

Disapprove \_\_\_\_\_

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